

Cross also saves lives long before tragedy strikes by helping individuals and entire communities learn to prepare for disasters.

The educational information distributed by the American Red Cross helps people feel safe at home, at work, at school, and at play. Last year, the Red Cross trained nearly 12 million people in lifesaving CPR and first aid, in the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDS), on HIV/AIDS education, and in lifeguarding and water safety. Many people also know about the Red Cross because of the organization's blood collection drives. In 2000, more than 6.3 million units of blood were collected from 4 million generous blood donors.

Under its charter, the American Red Cross is entrusted to deliver emergency messages and provide vital services for military members and their families. Staff members deploy with our Armed Forces to provide emergency communications and a caring presence to service men and women separated from their families. Almost 40,000 Red Cross volunteers work at more than 100 military sites here and around the world.

Through the years, the American Red Cross has reached out to people worldwide, preventing and relieving the most desperate cases of human suffering caused by crises abroad. For families in need right now—in more than 50 developing nations—the American Red Cross is helping to establish sanitary and healthy living conditions by creating reliable sources of food and water. The organization's international services save the lives of people threatened by calamities such as epidemics, natural disasters, armed conflict, deadly weather, social strife, or economic collapse.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2001 as American Red Cross Month. I request, as my predecessor Franklin Roosevelt did 58 years ago, that each American enlist in the Red Cross “army of mercy”—and give part of themselves to advance this organization's noble humanitarian mission. We have a long way yet to travel, but together, we can save lives. On behalf of a grateful Nation, we applaud and salute the selfless dedication of generations of Red Crossers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7409 of February 26, 2001

Irish-American Heritage Month, 2001

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Beginning from the earliest years of settlement, millions of Ireland's people have emigrated to America's shores. This immigration reached a particular

peak during the terrible years of the Great Famine more than 150 years ago. Irish immigrants, from professionals to laborers, made an enormous contribution to the building of our Nation.

The Irish who came to America endured many hardships but have prevailed to play vital roles in every chapter of our country's history. Nine of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Irish origin, and 19 Presidents of the United States have proudly claimed Irish heritage—including George Washington, Andrew Jackson, John F. Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan. Irish Americans have served with distinction in every war this Nation has fought, from Revolutionaries John Barry and Stephen Moylan to General Douglas MacArthur. Other influential and renowned figures of Irish descent include pioneers Buffalo Bill Cody, Daniel Boone, and Davy Crockett; authors Flannery O'Connor, Eugene O'Neill, and John O'Hara; Civil War photographer Matthew Brady; and entertainers Jackie Gleason, Gene Kelly, and John Wayne. These distinguished Americans represent only a small sampling of the men and women whose legacy has forever changed our national identity and who trace their ancestry to Ireland's green shores.

Today, the more than 44 million Americans who claim Irish heritage look back with pride on the achievements and contributions of their forebears. Irish Americans have distinguished themselves in every sector of American life. We are all enriched, strengthened, and blessed by their service to our country.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2001 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7410 of February 28, 2001

Fortieth Anniversary of the Peace Corps

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

The generous spirit of the American people has given this country a great and long-standing tradition of voluntary service. During the past four decades, the members of the Peace Corps have carried on that tradition with dramatic and far-reaching effect.

Established in 1961, the Peace Corps has brought a wealth of practical assistance to individuals and communities through out the world. Since its inception, more than 161,000 Americans have served as Peace Corps volunteers in 134 countries. Peace Corps volunteers have not only helped to fill